

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-11

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FM AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0865
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UNCLAS KUWAIT 2680

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SA, ZP, IR
SUBJ: SAUDI KING ON US ARMS AND GULF SECURITY: KUWAITI PRESS
INTERVIEW

1. KUWAIT DAILIES ARAB TIMES AND AL-SIYASAH (MAY 3) CARRIED SOMEWHAT DIVERGENT TEXTS OF INTERVIEW BY AHMAD JARALLAH OF SAUDI KING KHALID AND DEF MIN PRINCE SULTAN, WHICH TOOK PLACE IMMEDIATELY PRIOR TO RECENT CALL ON KING BY AMIR OF BAHRAIN. SAUDI DEF MIN PRINCE SULTAN AND/OR THE KING REPORTEDLY MADE BRIEF REFERENCE TO THE CONTROVERSY OVER PROPOSED US AIRCRAFT SALE TO SAUDI ARABIA. PRINCE IS REPORTED IN AL-SIYASAH AS SAYING: "WE WANT TO BUY ARMS. THE LOSER IS THE ONE WHO DOES NOT SELL." ARAB TIMES HAS KING KHALID SAYING THAT "IF AMERICA WILL NOT SUPPLY US WE WILL GO ELSEWHERE. WE WANT TO BUY ARMS FOR OUR DEFENSE AND WE SHALL FIND THEM. WE CAN FIND THEM ELSEWHERE."

2. IN RESPONSE TO QUESTION ON THE ROLE OF IRAN IN THE GULF AND "INTERNAL EVENTS" IN IRAN, KING KHALID REPORTEDLY SAID THAT "THIS AREA AS A WHOLE...IS CONSIDERED A COVETED AREA BY EAST AND WEST, BUT THE SHAH ENJOYS A STRONG AND WISE ADMINISTRATION." THE KING ADDED THAT PRESS REPORTS ON POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN IRAN ARE EXAGGERATED AND THAT
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IRAN WAS TRYING A SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT THAT WOULD PROVIDE MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR EXPRESSION OF POLITICAL OPINION. REGARDING THREATS TO GULF OIL RESOURCES, THE KING REPORTEDLY SAW "NO DANGER THAT THREATENS THIS AREA AS LONG AS THE PEOPLES OF THE AREA ENJOY SOLIDARITY."

3. IN RESPONSE TO A QUERY ON DEVELOPMENTS IN AFGHANISTAN AND

THE HORN OF AFRICA, THE KING REPORTEDLY HELD THE VIEW THAT
IT WAS "UNFORTUNATE THAT THE WESTERN WORLD, INCLUDING THE
GREAT POWERS, ARE CONCENTRATING ON LOCAL ISSUES."
MAESTRONE

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